

Mendip Hills AONB Management Plan Review

Review Questionnaire Feedback

Questionnaire Feedback 7/9/18-30/9/18

Advertised through: Twitter
 Facebook
 Local Press (Press Release sent 10/9)
 Enewsletter x2 (7/9 and 28/9)
 Email (196 Direct contacts)

72 Responses received

Comments have been reproduced verbatim with redactions where necessary.

Question	No.	Response	AONB Unit Response
Which best describes you or your organisation.	71	Resident 35.2% (25) Parish Council 11.3% (8) Conservation 7% (5) Local Authority 5.6% (4) Business 5.6% (4) Tourism 4.2% (3) Statutory/Government 4.2% (3) Community Group 4.2% (3) Access/Recreation 2.8% (2) AONB Volunteer 2.8% (2) Heritage 2.8% (2) Visitor 2.8% (2) Local Authority Planning Officer 1.4% (1) Agriculture 1.4% (1)	Broad range of respondents demonstrates professional and personal input to the consultation.

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		<p>Volunteer 1.4% (1) Sporting Organisation 1.4% (1) Community Benefit Society 1.4% (1) Water Utility 1.4% (1) CPRE Charity 1.4% (1) Consumer/beneficiary of natural environment 1.4% (1)</p>	
To what extent have you used the Management Plan 2014-19	71	<p>Don't use the management plan 45.1% (32) To find out more about the AONB 25.4% (18) To aid decision making 15.5% (11) To support a project/funding application elsewhere 5.6% (4) To support a bid to the AONB for project funding eg MHF 1.4% (1) To help promote the AONB to cottage rental guests 1.4% (1) Production of character assessment for Placemaking Plan 1.4% (1) To aid responses to planning applications 1.4% (1) General interest in a landscape I visit often 1.4% (1) To find out more about the AONB/To support a project/funding application elsewhere/ To support a bid to the AONB for project funding eg MHF 1.4% (1)</p>	All noted. The significant factor of 45% of respondents not using the plan demonstrates the need for continued support for awareness raising. When the plan is being used it is for significant reasons.
Do you feel that the objectives and policies reflect your organisations priorities	67	<p>Yes 50.7% (34) No 4.5% (3) Don't Know 44.8% (30)</p>	The significant 'Don't know' category demonstrates the need for continued support for awareness raising and explanation of the plan.
If yes, how	24	<p>Directly quoted objectives/policies in strategic documents 20.8% (5) Used all or part of the plan as part of the evidence base for your own plan 16.7% (4) Used policy wording to draft your own policies 12.5% (3) No 8.4% (2) Directly quoted objectives/policies to support funding bids 4.2% (1) Included reference to the Management Plan in your own policies 4.2% (1) No direct referencing or quoting 4.2% (1) To inform visitors whilst volunteering 4.2% (1) Referred others to the Management Plan 4.2% (1)</p>	All noted. Aim to increase the number of respondents who have 'Referred to the Management Plan in responses to planning application in the AONB'

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		<p>Referred to the Management Plan in responses to planning application in the AONB 4.2% (1) Referenced/quoted in consultations 4.2% (1) No formal policies needed for monthly lectures and archaeological research 4.2% (1) Included reference to the Management Plan in your own policies/ Directly quoted objectives/policies to support funding bids 4.2% (1) We have over 17000 campers each year so we think it only right for us to donate to those who preserve the land and enable adventure 4.2% (1)</p>	
Theme: Landscape Quality	67	<p>Strongly Agree: 80.6% (54) Agree: 13.4% (9) Disagree: 4.5% (3) Strongly Disagree: 1.5% (1)</p>	All noted.
Comments	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a lot of grazing on the men dips and I believe there is opportunity to reduce the extent and intensity of this, and increase the wooded area, in order to sequester carbon and to reduce soil erosion. • In the past, interaction of people with nature did not include tourists. • This includes views of the AONB from outside its boundaries. • We have a tourism related business so all of the above are important to us and our customers. • Quarrying continues to expand • Ignorance can lead to unintended damage of the environment • Agree with this, and also see opportunities for creating better ecological resilience by more woodland and trees outside woodlands. The AONB could play a crucial by getting even more involved in local targeting. • AONB designation is based first and foremost on landscape quality 	<p>Landscape Character Assessment to guide woodland creation. Variety of issues raised here reflects the important role the AONB Unit provides in collecting information about the state of the AONB and interpreting this to the Partnership in order to make balanced decisions.</p>
Theme: Biodiversity & Geodiversity	66	<p>Strongly Agree: 80.3% (53) Agree: 15.2% (10)</p>	All noted.

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		Disagree: 1.5% (1) Strongly Disagree: 3% (2)	
Comments	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can you benefit " people and business" and wildlife? The more people and business you attract the less chance wildlife has to survive. • Introducing the Exmoor ponies to help graze the moorland was a good idea. • This also has an historical aspect - the way in which the Mendip Hills are now a diverse landscape is largely down to manipulation by people over millenia. • Any benefits of new businesses, such as mining and fracking need to be set against the disbenefits accruing to the landscape, wild life, people, etc. • Again the geodiversity is all about business • Really pleased to see this. Inevitably though, this may involve letting some areas move from agriculture to woodland or wetland. In some cases, this may involve some loss of species in one habitat but gains in species or other public goods in another habitat. The AONB may need to take some brave decisions and focus less on individual species and more on wider ecological functions. 	Access and recreation objectives to guide visitors to more robust areas of the landscape where the special qualities can be experienced. Landscape Character Assessment to guide woodland creation.
Theme: Historic Environment & Cultural Heritage	67	Strongly Agree: 68.7% (46) Agree: 23.9% (16) Disagree: 6% (4) Strongly Disagree: 1.5% (1)	
Comments	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There might be conflict between conservation and enhancement • How can visitors enjoy a " rich experiance of place" if by their very presence they have destroyed wildlife habitat? • I agree with this entirely. I think the wider issue of enjoyment of the historic environment should include community involvement, as that helps shape that sense of place and ownership. 	Access and recreation objectives to guide visitors to more robust areas of the landscape where the special qualities can be experienced. Participation section of plan includes an objective on involvement with the management of the AONB, including heritage features.

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • But the needs of the local communities are constantly changing and should be given some priority if relevant: eg they need a new reservoir and a likely choice of site is just outside the AONB and visible from it. • There seems to be no development plan for old quarries. They just get designated dangerous or held on to until they are viable again • Once again, I agree with this, but flag the need to balance management decisions with consideration of wider public goods. Realistically, it may not be possible to conserve and enhance "all sites, structures and landscapes" as it states above. In some locations, other public goods may need to take priority, such as flood mitigation or woodland creation. The AONB is a crucial arbiter in this process. • Cultural heritage needs to be separated. • My response is if this is a mission statement.. Not just some management speak. • We, West Horrington Ladies Circle, are still hoping that the Old Buddle House, in Biddle Combe, West Horrington will be restored. It is an important stone structure which was part of lead mining on the Mendip and is the only one still in existence. We hope that the stone domed roof can be rebuilt. We have a detail plan for the restoration. [REDACTED] 	<p>NAAONB indicator refers to number Scheduled Monuments being maintained.</p> <p>3.3.2 of the existing plan highlights the cultural heritage.</p> <p>Variety of issues raised here highlights the expectations placed on the AONB Unit and the importance of initiatives like the Mendip Hills Fund that can support community driven projects.</p>
Theme: Recreation, Access and Tourism	70	<p>Strongly Agree: 65.7% (46) Agree: 24.3% (17) Disagree: 7.1% (5) Strongly Disagree: 2.9% (2)</p>	
Comments	15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For all to enjoy and future generations. A fantastic legacy to our wonderful Mendip Hills that I love. • This needs to be more specific in order to set priorities and avoid the potential conflicts within these sub themes • It may be a personal thing but I would like more opportunities to camp cheaply on the mendips 	<p>Delivery plan to set priorities and continued partnership working to address visitor pressure on habitats.</p> <p>Phrase 'access for all' is balanced in the existing plan with the words 'in accordance with the purposes</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does this ALSO apply to wildlife or is it your intention to destroy the very habitat that is necessary for their survival? • Although I agree that restrictions in an individual's mobility should not in general limit access I do not agree that this access should be provided at significant cost or in a manner that changes the original environment • It is important to maintain good access for all in areas like this, ones which will benefit people, communities and the environment. • The AONB have been supportive of orienteering and we hope this will continue. This sport allows people of all ages and abilities to enjoy the varied countryside from woods (Stockhill and East Harptree) to the open land. • Organised orienteering events are good for encouraging enjoyment of the AONB by a wide range of ages, while minimising the impact on the environment through competitors not following a set route. • I Struggle to understand how the very noisy motocross meetings at Cheddar Head fit within the objectives of the AONB. • Key is all, and all pursuits. More pen access is required for mountain bikers whereas ramblers have many more routes and access available • Emphasis on quiet! More joined up footpaths would be nice. • Please can all cycling events have warning signs in place that an event is taking place. As residents of a local village we often find cyclists suddenly on country lanes without warning. Though we give them the courtesy they deserve we do not always get the same in return. Is cycling 4 abreast a good safe idea??? • Some areas of the Mendips just are not at all suitable for extensive activities or access for all, being too fragile. 	<p>of AONB designation' i.e. conserve and enhance the landscape. Control of pursuits that do not fit with the purposes of designation need to be controlled by the appropriate authority.</p>
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certainly encourages recreational use but I'm not sure the current level is sustainable - let alone increasing such usage. • Tourism yes, certainly: but with checks and balances to avoid over-use 	
Theme: Natural Resources	69	<p>Strongly Agree: 63.8% (44) Agree: 30.4% (21) Disagree: 2.9% (2) Strongly Disagree: 2.9% (2)</p>	
Comments	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need more specifics e.g. habitats, clear skies, pollution, maintenance of paths etc • Doesn't seem to be much discussion of energy apart from biomass. More use could be made of solar thermal, PV and heat pumps to reduce fuel deliveries. There may be some opportunities for small wind as there once was at charterhouse • See above • We would welcome you adding timber or wood products into this list. They are absolutely critical and often forgotten. In 2017, we imported 82% of our timber and wood product requirements. So supporting local growers and the local supply chain is crucial. • Including a lobby against fracking as a protection of the aquifer. • We have ongoing concerns that expansion of quarrying is affecting the visual amenity for visitors, also with noise, dust and heavy lorry traffic and congestion. 	<p>Woodland issues dealt with in Land Management. Renewable energy dealt with in Development & Transport. Other comments noted.</p>
Theme: Land Management	67	<p>Strongly Agree: 47.8% (32) Agree: 35.8% (24) Disagree: 13.4% (9) Strongly Disagree: 3% (2)</p>	
Comments	14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I don't really know 	<p>Ensure wording reflects 'land management' that enhances the area.</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The increase in woodland in the AONB is also important to mitigate the flooding risk in the Somerset Levels outside the AONB. • No mention of quarrying • Agriculture in itself does not contribute to provision of clean water. Rather, sensitive and appropriate management of land does help to enable processes which provide clean water, flood risk management, replenishment of groundwater supplies. • Managing our land and natural resources sustainable is of the utmost importance • The Forestry Commission have sometimes placed restrictions on access. Not being able to use public car parks for events has been an inconvenience. • The woods are not managed in the way that they were - trees have fallen blocking footpaths and coppicing is virtually non-existent • There has been a very slight increase in woodland management nationally. I can check the local figures for you, but I think they also showed an increase. Can we add "wood products" after fuel, since this is also increasing, but slower than we would like. • Land should not be used for woodland for fuel • The last sentence needs removing and adding elsewhere. • I have seen no evidence of woodlands being managed for fuel! • Ensure that there is a sustainable approach to agriculture. Some farmers use of plastic is phenomenal and it left lying around in field for years to decay. • Need to do more to work with farmers and landowners in managing land for nature and highlighting the wider environmental benefits • Some of the themes could be combined here - e.g. land management and natural resources? 	<p>Review the inclusion of 'wood fuel'. Can we demonstrate that this has happened anywhere and/or should be included in the objectives?</p> <p>Establish a Farmers Working Group, possible continuation of the SWT Facilitation Fund Group.</p>
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Theme: Development and Transport	64	Strongly Agree: 43.8% (28) Agree: 40.6% (26) Disagree: 9.4% (6) Strongly Disagree: 6.3% (4)	
Comments	13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I don't know • probably better to say ' To ensure development in or near the AONB...' • No sustainable transport links, so development isn't in keeping. • Plans with affordable housing should be encouraged. • Creating good public transport links to areas like the Chew Valley is important to minimise the impact of cars and increase and encourage better links with local cities • I don't know the area well enough to comment on the quality or sustainability of the developments. • No needs to have 'including tranquility' as this is one of the special qualities • Yes and what about transport ! Or this bit conveniently missed out from your above statement. • Any development needs to take into account traffic issues • Transport (or lack of public transport) is a major issue. • The biggest danger to respecting and enhancing the special qualities of this area appears to be the encroachment of housing development in the surrounding villages - this is unsustainable • So far so good but I'm wary of the idea of a new "Mendip town" being discussed by N Somerset and by their "head in the sand" approach to limiting the use of both the A368 & Burrington Combe by heavy trucks. The 7.7t limit between the Combe & the A38 simply does not begin to solve the problem - regardless of what N Somerset write in the press. • Public transport is decaying within the area, increasing reliance on cars 	Comments noted.
Theme: Participation	67	Strongly Agree: 47.8% (32)	

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		<p>Agree: 35.8% (24) Disagree: 11.9% (8) Strongly Disagree: 4.5% (3)</p>	
Comments	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I don't know • Also, for children and young people, 'learning to love the AONB and understand its potential.' • The Mendip Society is happy to make our Nature Reserves available for this. • I am not aware of any training and we are constantly picking up rubbish left by the public who have little or no respect for the environment. • Also don't know area well enough to comment • Very important to get young people involved • It would be appreciated if these sub organisations under the AONB umbrella could be printed into a handy brochure and became available for all. I would find that immensely interesting. Why is the Woodland Trust not part of AONB? • Buy-in from the local community is important but AONBs have a significant role in a national context • Many in fringe conurbations do not make great use of the opportunities to access and so value the AONB: walking, riding, biking ... 	Comments noted and underline the importance of awareness raising at different levels.
L1 Promote appropriate management to ensure that the distinctive Mendip Hills AONB landscape is maintained and enhanced	70	<p>Strongly Agree: 75.7% (53) Agree: 17.1% (12) Disagree: 2.9% (2) Strongly Disagree: 4.3% (3)</p>	
Comments	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The use of expertise is essential • I think there is a case for reducing grazed area and increasing wild area and woodland • But some change must be allowed. It should not be a fossilised landscape • Who will do the management? 	Comments noted.

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be set in the context that the AONB does not own any land and we have to work with the landowning community. We need to reintroduce Mendip wardens 	
L2 Provide opportunities to acquire and develop skills required to care for and promote the landscape and its special qualities	70	<p>Strongly Agree: 65.7% (46) Agree: 27.1% (19) Disagree: 2.9% (2) Strongly Disagree: 4.3% (3)</p>	
Comments	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To keep the special qualities ie dry stone walls etc Does this include heritage skills? Promotion of this should be towards schools and young people. It's important to provide the opportunities, however, the adage "you can lead a horse to water but you can't make it drink" springs to mind Only where this contributes to L1 In my personal capacity what is available to me".....not a thing 	Comments noted.
L3 Increase awareness and appreciation of the purposes of designation and the special qualities of the AONB	69	<p>Strongly Agree: 65.2% (45) Agree: 29% (20) Disagree: 2.9% (2) Strongly Disagree: 2.9% (2)</p>	
Comments	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social media reaches the whole planet If this is to promote wildlife I strongly agree, HOWEVER if this is to promote tourism I strongly disagree. and the boundary which could be extended to the East Mendips. Why refer to purposes? I suspect awareness is low in many social groupings Yes, I could not even get into the PDF' so how could I even start to become aware 	Comments noted.
L4 Increase awareness of the benefits of supporting	67	<p>Strongly Agree: 67.2% (45) Agree: 25.4% (17)</p>	

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local products and services that help conserve and enhance the landscape		Disagree: 4.5% (3) Strongly Disagree: 3% (2)	
Comments	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look at what has happened to the strawberry fields since 1960 !!!! • and promote appreciation of what the AONB can offer and produce. • despite "Brexit", what can be done to protect the naming of "Cheddar Cheese". • Difficult to do with limited marketing resources • Well I should think so 	Comments noted. Implications of BREXIT unknown at this date (10/2018) but plan needs a statement on linking the change in farm payments to the AONB objectives.
BG1 Ensure that there is no net loss of characteristic habitats and species	66	Strongly Agree: 80.3% (53) Agree: 13.6% (9) Disagree: 4.5% (3) Strongly Disagree: 1.5% (1)	
Comments	13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some changes may be inevitable, for example from climate change • There is little point in farmers laying hedges and only cutting during the winter months when dogs are allowed to drive birds from these same hedges. • and restore any species that used to flourish in the AONB but which are in danger of declining/have moved away. • In principle ensuring no net loss is sound, however the quality/importance of the habitat/species may differ from area to area. Thus losing a piece of characteristic habitat in one area although 'compensated' elsewhere may not on balance be a 'no net loss' as the quality maybe inferior in the remaining area. • Need to increase • Change is constant and must be embraced to dovetail well together • We should be aiming for a net gain rather than ensuring there is no net loss 	Objective BG1 reflects the 'no net loss' wording in the government's Biodiversity 2020: A Strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services.

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See my previous comments - hard choices may need to be made between species and habitats. • Good objective but not met during of the current plan as Long Eared Owl a Mendip Local Priority Action Plan Species no longer breeds within the AONB. I don't know of any plans by the AONB or Forestry Commission which might rectify the situation. So in reality the AONB would like to be able to "ensure" that no losses occur but does not have the powers or the resources to prevent this. • If not it just because a geological attraction • We need nature and nature need us to not mistreat it. • Why net loss? • A SMART objective serving as a clear indicator of performance 	
BG2 Promote a landscape scale approach to the conservation and expansion of coherent and resilient ecological networks within and adjoining the AONB	63	<p>Strongly Agree: 71.4% (45) Agree: 25.4% (16) Disagree: 1.6% (1) Strongly Disagree: 1.6% (1)</p>	
Comments	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • looking to create wildlife corridors is key to improving biodiversity of our countrysides • The linking of habitats such as woodland and the creation of wildlife corridors is very important. • Question is almost unintelligible without more detail of what this involves and leads me to suspect that the survey is loaded towards certain groups • The Lawton Report combined with the current economic climate means partnerships at the landscape scale are essential to future success • I don't understand a "landscape scale approach" so can't comment 	Comments noted. Amend wording to Promote a landscape scale approach to the conservation and enhancement of ecological networks within and adjoining the AONB.
BG3 Increase monitoring and awareness of the	64	<p>Strongly Agree: 68.8% (44) Agree: 23.4% (15)</p>	

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biodiversity resource of the Mendip Hills AONB so that it is sufficiently understood to continue to guide the successful conservation of the characteristic habitats and species		Disagree: 6.3% (4) Strongly Disagree: 1.6% (1)	
Comments	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Definitely, don't want to lose any habitats or species I suggest that you monitor the impact tourism and the expansion of adjacent villages is having on wildlife. Barn owls used to be a common sight on the lower slopes of the Mendip Hills in the fifties and sixties. Farming practices in these areas have not changed so WHY have they disappeared. working with universities, schools and other research institutes. I carry out weekly Butterfly monitoring on a range of Mendip sites on behalf of Butterfly Conservation. I'm not aware of any involvement by the AONB in this work. 	Sharing of knowledge and research is in the objectives of the of the plan and needs to be addressed in the Delivery Plan.
BG4 Promote a holistic approach to implementing AONB Management Plan objectives, National Character Area Statements of Opportunity and a locally designated Nature Improvement Area's objectives	64	Strongly Agree: 62.5% (40) Agree: 23.4% (15) Disagree: 10.9% (7) Strongly Disagree: 3.1% (2)	
Comments	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I think this can go now. Another meaningless objective statement which is meaningless without what you want to do , by when etc Let people know what you are doing, I can't help but feel that the small artical that appeared in the Cheddar Gazette published(dated 27 September) hardly giving the public much notice of this badly put together questionare. But 	Comments noted.

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		<p>perhaps you don't really want the public view anyway , we just get in your way</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The simpler the better! • Not sure what a "holistic approach" means in this context • This needs updating to reflect current approaches/priorities 	
BG5 Recognise and celebrate geological sites and features of the Mendip Hills AONB to ensure the successful conservation both of the geology and wildlife habitat they provide	69	<p>Strongly Agree: 73.9% (51) Agree: 20.3% (14) Disagree: 2.9% (2) Strongly Disagree: 2.9% (2)</p>	
Comments	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commendable but not sure that the AONB can "ensure" that objectives are met, after all this is an AONB not a National Park. • this is most important 	Comments noted.
BG6 Increase awareness of the Mendip Hills geology, particularly cave systems in relation to the importance they play in water management and water supply	66	<p>Strongly Agree: 75.8% (50) Agree: 16.7% (11) Disagree: 6.1% (4) Strongly Disagree: 1.5% (1)</p>	
Comments	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What impact is the extraction of water by Bristol Water Company having on the water table on the western Mendip slopes? I have noticed a significant drop in level since 1969. • The Mendip Rocks Festival should play a bigger part in this subject. • As I know nothing about this other than water comes out of the caves in Cheddar • rather narrow in its scope of awareness - more cover of geological factors relating to the historic and archaeological aspects should be emphasised 	Variety of issues raised here reflects the important role the AONB Unit provides in collecting information about the state of the AONB and interpreting this to the Partnership in order to make balanced decisions.

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding Geodiversity must have a lot to do with soil erosion and quality, as geology largely governs soil quality and land forms and geology affect erosion. 	
H1 Improve the recording, interpretation and understanding of all aspects of the AONBs historic environment to ensure local communities and visitors enjoy a rich experience of the sense of place	69	<p>Strongly Agree: 65.2% (45) Agree: 26.1% (18) Disagree: 7.2% (5) Strongly Disagree: 1.4% (1)</p>	
Comments	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This can be achieved by working with the local authority historic environment teams. including the creation of modern media outlets such as videos,. social media inputs, tweets, Blogs, etc. Particularly in relation to schools we should consider the sighting of local information boards to increase awareness. I am a member of a local archeology group I am not aware that we lease with the AONB or submit reports of digs to the AONB. Did you not ask this in a different section? The Buddle House in Biddle Combe, West Horrington, is of great historic interest, being part of lead mining on Mendip, and should be restored. 	Comments noted and underline the importance of awareness raising at different levels.
H2 Increase awareness and communicate the significance of the high quality historic environment of the Mendip Hills AONB	69	<p>Strongly Agree: 66.7% (46) Agree: 24.6% (17) Disagree: 7.2% (5) Strongly Disagree: 1.4% (1)</p>	
Comments	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This can be achieved by working with the local authority historic environment teams. Why, as a resident, do I not know about these objectives? I do not know about some of these websites like 	Comments noted and underline the importance of awareness raising at different levels.

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		<p>greentraveller.co.uk. I have lived in the same area-midsomer norton for 15 yrs ... I believe there needs to be more proactive approach to increasing awareness to some of these historic sites.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of lead mining is found throughout the Mendip Hills. • Fair bit of overlap with H1 	
H3 Promote appropriate management of sites, structures and landscapes designated for their international, national, regional or local importance in the historic environment to ensure no further loss of heritage assets	69	<p>Strongly Agree: 78.3% (54) Agree: 15.9% (11) Disagree: 4.3% (3) Strongly Disagree: 1.4% (1)</p>	
Comments	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This can be achieved by working with the local authority historic environment teams (and Historic England). NSC heritage officers will be happy to help produce documentation to help landowners and owners of historic buildings. • As before, agree with the principle but hard choices may need to be made between this and other public goods. • Promotion cannot "ensure" that no losses will occur [REDACTED] • The Buddle House, Biddle Combe, Wesr Horrington, is an imortant part of our heritage and we would hope that the stone domed roof could be rebuilt. We have detailed plans and costings. 	Comments noted.
R1 Maintain, improve and promote public access and quiet recreational activities with measures to ensure	68	<p>Strongly Agree: 69.1% (47) Agree: 23.5% (16) Disagree: 4.4% (3) Strongly Disagree: 2.9% (2)</p>	

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access for all in accordance with the purposes of AONB designation			
Comments	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which has president, wildlife or tourism. Tourism is killing off wildlife habitats within AONB. Wildlife flourished during the foot and mouth outbreak. Reason, NO dogs and no tourists. • Priority given to those who find access difficult. • Need to ensure that while access is encouraged, restrictions are in place around dogs, due to the potential impact they have on livestock. There is a widespread lack of public understanding of the fact that even if their dogs do not attack sheep/cattle, they do still cause stress. Unfortunately there are also plenty of instances of livestock being attacked. • Orienteering fits this objective. • More people enjoying the AONB will encourage more people to support its protection • Again the AONB is not delivering on the objective, motocross meetings on the top of Mendip are extremely noisy and take place at weekends when most visitors would like to enjoy the area in peace. • For all non motorised groups. Most of the mountain bike routes on Blackdown are unrideable as soon as it rains but walkers have open access despite the fact that the footpaths banned to bikes remain suitable in all weather conditions • A balance between maintaining quiet recreational activities and encouraging 'honey pot' locations for many more visitors is essential to protect the environment i.e. littering, erosion, rural crime increases (car break-ins) opportunities for 'fly-tipping' etc. • Some consideration should be given to the impact of on and off road cycling both from an environmental impact and safety point of view. 	

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interested in the definition of "quiet recreational activities". National Parks removed "quiet enjoyment" from their purposes in 1996 I agree apart from where the emphasis on "promote" veers towards increasing numbers rather than encouraging quiet recreational activities. The paths and bridle way through Biddle Combe are good. 	
R2 Support the development of tourism and day visits that benefits the local economy, conserves and enhances the landscape and improves understanding of the Mendip Hills	68	<p>Strongly Agree: 55.9% (38) Agree: 26.5% (18) Disagree: 14.7% (10) Strongly Disagree: 2.9% (2)</p>	
Comments	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How close to carrying capacity are the car parks? How can tourism conserve and enhance the landscape? In Canada the National Parks strictly limit numbers of tourists within the Parks and tourists are heavily fined if they stray off designated trails. Cf Footpaths !!!!! Up to a point but tourism can destroy sites of there is too much of it. Support to local producers and manufacturers is paramount The present footpath system does not cope well with even the current visitor level, let alone an increased one, particularly in winter Very important Mendip AONB is a major asset in the West of England tourism offer, but doesn't have the profile or reputation of the nearby Cotswolds as a great place to explore and stay in. From an economic and environmental perspective it would be good to encourage more staying visitors, and promote the quality accommodation, food and drink and outdoor 	<p>Variety of issues raised here reflects the important role the AONB Unit provides in collecting information about the state of the AONB and interpreting this to the Partnership in order to make balanced decisions. Omit the words 'day visits'.</p>

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		<p>activities that the area has to offer. Make the Mendips a focus for quality experiences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Think we can remove day visits now • We need good transport links or how else are the tourist coming we no longer have a rail net work! • The local school children visit Biddle Combe. 	
R3 Develop and promote more sustainable methods of travel to and around the AONB for enjoyment and recreation	67	<p>Strongly Agree: 61.2% (41) Agree: 23.9% (16) Disagree: 10.4% (7) Strongly Disagree: 4.5% (3)</p>	
Comments	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harder now as bus services decline in Somerset. Perhaps electric charging points for sustainable car travel. • You seem to want to eliminate all wildlife from the Mandip Hills. • Promote use of cycles, electric cars, and horse riding to and in the AONB • This should not be linked to the promotion of single purpose cycle paths, these are rarely used by 'regular' cyclists, or to a restriction (by speed limits) of the road network as these are important and significant transport and commuting routes. • methods of transportation for local residents should be considered. • Not for the AONB to spend time on • this is an area that is severely lacking in the mendip and needs to be improved • The lack of decent public transport and bus routes from nearby towns and cities into the Mendips is an ongoing problem. • What you going to do a park and ride ! 	Comments noted. Also see Development & Transport section.
R4 Support healthy lifestyles by encouraging more people to use the	70	<p>Strongly Agree: 61.4% (43) Agree: 30% (21) Disagree: 2.9% (2)</p>	

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Mendip Hills for sustainable outdoor activities		Strongly Disagree: 5.7% (4)	
Comments	13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The more people that visit the Mendips the less chance wildlife has to survive. • See R3 re cycle paths • Yes providing the free use of the beautiful Mendips isn't abused by professional organisations for financial gain. • I think the use of mountain bikes is already damaging the Mendip environment • Very important • Provided this is linked to education on how to avoid damage that will adversely impact other users in the future • Continue support for orienteering events • Make use of mass participation, low impact events to draw more people to the area, eg regional orienteering championships • Encouraging 'targeted' people or remove 'more' • Many places now have mountain bike centres that attract many visitors. We have the topography but to accomadate high numbers all weather routes would need to be built and the financial returns assessed. We would be an even bigger draw for day trips from Bristol so routing needs to pass pubs or cafes to get a return. Weekend visitors from further afield benefit acomadation providers. Welsh and Scottish centres could provide information on benefits. • As long as it is organised well and does not impact on the quality of life of residents in the area. • Where compatible with conservation of the natural and cultural environment • If you must, get them to come away from peak times!! Any dry weekend after 10:30 the honey pots on the Hill are full. 	Omit the word 'more'.
N1 Recognise and promote the benefits and relevance of the AONB as a valuable	68	Strongly Agree: 70.6% (48) Agree: 23.5% (16) Disagree: 2.9% (2)	

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source of ecosystem services, economic and health benefits		Strongly Disagree: 2.9% (2)	
Comments	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A nature reserve is NOT a place for economic benefit. Ban all tourists from AONB during bird nesting season. • Of the 'Mendip Hills', the AONB designation in itself can't provide other benefits • Oh come on, you have had each of your departments come up with management speak, the odd statement, and thrown them all in to this Monmouth review that even if people find it will get ██████████ with the length and the constant repetition of the same questions. You would have to be a mupit not to go for strongly agree for a majority of these questions. Is that in order to make you feel good! • Ecosystem services should be recognized beyond the boundaries of AONBs and protected landscapes 	Comments noted.
N2 Promote conservation of water resources and enhance their quality taking measures to reduce low flows and flooding by appropriate management and use	65	<p>Strongly Agree: 78.5% (51) Agree: 16.9% (11) Disagree: 3.1% (2) Strongly Disagree: 1.5% (1)</p>	
Comments	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The water table on the western slopes of the Mendips has dropped considerably since I first started taking readings in 1969. WHY? • keep an eye on planning, especially on flood plain land. • Needs a comma after quality • I understand how the AONB might "promote" conservation of water resources but the rest looks like more wishful thinking as the AONB cannot control the actions of local landowners. 	Comments noted and grammar correction.
N3 Promote sustainable management of soils in	69	<p>Strongly Agree: 79.7% (55) Agree: 18.8% (13)</p>	

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accordance with best practice to minimise erosion and water pollution and maximise resilience to drought		Disagree: 0% (0) Strongly Disagree: 1.4% (1)	
Comments	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No mention of quarrying on this page Needs a higher priority Blagdon lake has always suffered from excessive nitrate and soil runoff from high up on the Mendips. 	Comments noted. Quarrying under Land Management section.
LMI Support sustainable farming to ensure it remains as the principle land use and contributes to maintaining the special qualities of the AONB	68	Strongly Agree: 73.5% (50) Agree: 22.1% (15) Disagree: 1.5% (1) Strongly Disagree: 2.9% (2)	
Comments	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key word is sustainable... grazing might not be Support how? Rather vague The definition of sustainable farming should be clarified. Economically 'sustainable' may encourage intensive operations, which may be questionable in animal welfare terms, but still be deemed environmentally sustainable being closed systems. Sustainable farming is appropriate but animal welfare must always be monitored. Several times this year I have found sheep in my garden that have wandered down off the hills. This obviously causes a serious hazard to motorists (and the sheep) and takes time to locate the farmer responsible, so the sheep can be returned to their flock. Sustainable farming, and creating a network of farmers that are working together, is important for the future of of soil, flora and fauna Be good to raise the profile of locally produced food and drink, 	Comments noted.

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change this to "Support sustainable farming and forestry". The public benefits of forestry can be even higher than farming. Softwood and mixed crops are more beneficial to the landscape and other public goods than many of the more intensive farming methods. Let's value them on a level playing field. Both allow rural businesses to survive and thrive in the landscape. • What evidence does the AONB have to show that current farming on Mendip is sustainable. Much of the farming on the Mendip plateau is intensive and therefore probably not sustainable in the long run. The objective appears to say that the AONB is happy with the status quo. • Yes it needs as much support as possible - it is one of the special qualities of the AONB and much needed. • There could be scope for re-wilding: where food production is not necessarily the end goal 	
LM2 Support and promote rural land management that conserves and enhances natural resources, including biodiversity, landscape character the historic environment and aids public awareness and enjoyment of the Mendip Hills AONB	68	<p>Strongly Agree: 79.4% (54) Agree: 19.1% (13) Disagree: 0% (0) Strongly Disagree: 1.5% (1)</p>	
Comments	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The first statement is NOT compatible with the last. You cannot have your cake and eat it. • Some of the farms are in a terrible state. • Fair bit of overlap with LM1? 	Comments noted. LM1 refers to 'sustainable' agriculture, recognising how agriculture has shaped the area we see today, whereas LM2 refers to all types of land management.
LM3 Promote a sustainable woodland economy that enhances the Mendip Hills AONB woodlands and wider	69	<p>Strongly Agree: 76.8% (53) Agree: 17.4% (12) Disagree: 4.3% (3) Strongly Disagree: 1.4% (1)</p>	

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landscape with targeted woodland management and creation in appropriate locations supporting wood fuel and local community opportunities			
Comments	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is great, and really pleased to see it in here. It sounds mainly focused around smaller broadleaved woodlands, which will be more marginal in their profits. That's OK, but could be a bit more aspirational, eg by including timber or wood products, not just logs. I'd quite like to discuss the wording of this with you. • I would ask the question- why isn't the Woodland Trust involved? As there is a wealth of trees and forestland within the AONB region. I would to see woodland and woodland walks recorded and printed as part of a series of interesting sections, naming trees and plants along the walks. This could form an awesome series of cycle rides, woodland walks, mendip way, and circular walks in OS format and other views. To find walks is quite difficult if you don't know where to search • This needs to be encouraged. • Encourage closer links with other agencies/charities i.e. the Woodland Trust, National Trust, & private estates, to meet the LM3 objectives 	Comments noted.
LM4 Influence the use, restoration and after use of all quarries to minimise the impact on the landscape and to be compatible with the purposes of designation	69	<p>Strongly Agree: 82.6% (57) Agree: 15.9% (11) Disagree: 0% (0) Strongly Disagree: 1.4% (1)</p>	
Comments	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restoration of quarries maybe very difficult after the inherent ravage of the landscape through quarrying operations. Re-use to include the use of quarries for water storage or water tourism may be appropriate if there is no loss of dry habitats. 	Comments noted.

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At last! Influence is just wet. You need to have some control • Please let us know if you need FC support on woodland creation opportunities in these locations. • Depends what you mean by restoration. From a wildlife perspective there is an argument to leave them alone and let them become a haven for wildlife. • Given the number this is vital otherwise they have just literally ripped the heart out of the area • In particular the Batts Combe "scar" that dominates views to the Mendips from the south. • LM4 could specifically include management of quarries to preserve and provide access to important features for public education and enjoyment, in support of the initiatives such as Mendip Rocks and Quarry Faces already in place. • In general, geological resources need to be safeguarded for ongoing and future research as well as access in the present. 	
D1 Working with the local planning authorities, ensure that development in the AONB and its setting is of a nature, scale, location and design that meets community need without compromising the special qualities of the Mendip Hills AONB	69	<p>Strongly Agree: 81.2% (56) Agree: 15.9% (11) Disagree: 1.4% (1) Strongly Disagree: 1.4% (1)</p>	
Comments	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • But allow wind farms • Not only within the AONB BUT also in villages adjacent. e.g. Cheddar. Recent development in Cheddar does not reflect the nature, scale or design of local cottages and farmhouses • and with other agencies concerned with development in the AONB and its vicinity. 	Comments noted. Transport is a recurring theme in this survey.

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with the local planning authorities is an extremely important function of the AONB to ensure the conservation and enhancement of the AONB for all. Encouraging cross authority collaboration of development planning through the Partnership is vital to ensure that the AONB remains intact in the long term. • Also working with other groups such as The Mendip Society and CPRE to present a united front with landscape enhancement/conservation as a primary objective • New housing developments need to be blended in with the landscape • planning applications should be forced to comply with the factors that enhance the area despite the numerous and unsuitable plans that seem to get approved. • Reminder of the 'highest status of protection' needs to go in here? • Put authorities don't seem to put needs of community's any where high on there agenda, and if you live in the rural areas you have no chance. • More needs to be done to minimise impact of transport and building projects within this area. • Cut the housing development • This is very important we need to keep the special qualities of these communities and not have one village merge in to the next...losing forever the uniqueness. Green gaps between villages again are of the same importance. Any proposed cycle routes again need to be done with the thought and care for wild life and the quality of peace and quiet to residents living near by. 	
D2 Working with the local highways authorities, ensure that the special qualities of the AONB are fully respected in the planning, design, provision	68	<p>Strongly Agree: 79.4% (54) Agree: 16.2% (11) Disagree: 2.9% (2) Strongly Disagree: 1.5% (1)</p>	

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and management of all types of transport and associated infrastructure			
Comments	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timeliness of provision should be considered. • This is severely lacking in application but nice objective. • To encourage local cycling groups to use roads with more consideration to others. • there must be a strong emphasis on the provision of public transport and discouraging the use of cars • See my previous comments, infrastructure don't make me laugh, for the next 3 months if you don't have a car and live any where along the A371 east of Draycott, you will not be able to go any where, the only bus service is not running due to road works no alternative has been offered.problems caused welfare, school access, getting to work".....the list goes on.i know it's not all your responseability but it really effects communities, and you are saying you lease with other agency's, see D4. • An increase of public transport would be helpful • But the highways authorities must consider that traffic levels across the Hill are already high at peak travel times and at weekends with a mix of cars, bikes & heavy trucks creating a very dangerous environment. 	Comments noted. Transport is a recurring theme in this survey.
D3 Encourage reduction in Carbon emissions within the AONB through reducing energy consumption, applying energy conservation measures, encouraging more sustainable patterns of development, and utilising renewable energy generation technologies that are of an appropriate	68	<p>Strongly Agree: 77.9% (53) Agree: 14.7% (10) Disagree: 4.4% (3) Strongly Disagree: 2.9% (2)</p>	

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type and scale for their siting			
Comments	11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow wind farms if community owned • Support especially the scale of renewable energy projects is important rather than a blanket ban • Would not support the installation of any large or even small scale solar or wind farms. Any renewable energy generation needs to be on a low impact scale. There are numerous agricultural buildings that could used to install solar panelling and this should be encouraged. • Reducing carbon emissions is always a positive move, especially in/on/around the Mendip Hills. However, the vast majority of visitors still have to get there by some form of motorised transport. • Not for the AONB to do • And carbon offsetting through woodland creation in right locations. • Unsure of how the AONB Partnership can address 'reducing energy consumption, applying energy conservation measures' • Yes but not if that means fields of solar panels or wind turbines • To monitor the air quality along areas of the AONB where we now have many large HGV vehicles and we have wild life and residents living in close proximity. Dry stone walls that get knocked and never replaced by large lorries... • Discourage where ever possible the spread of wind turbines & solar farms • This is probably not the place for the comment but the plan should also promote and encourage a "dark sky" approach. 	Comments noted. Transport is a recurring theme in this survey. Variety of issues raised here reflects the important role the AONB Unit provides in collecting information about the state of the AONB and interpreting this to the Partnership in order to make balanced decisions.
D4 Ensure issues of importance for the management of the AONB landscape are fully reflected	68	<p>Strongly Agree: 79.4% (54) Agree: 13.2% (9) Disagree: 5.9% (4) Strongly Disagree: 1.5% (1)</p>	

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in strategies and plans produced by other agencies and local communities			
Comments	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management Plans must be reflected in Local Plans and Neighbourhood Plans • Can't foist narrow opinion on a large population, needs to be measured with landscape and people living here • Roadside littering and illegal dumping is rife and will hopefully be addressed • YES DONT FORGET THE LOCAL COMMUNITIES most agencies are only interest in profit. 	Variety of issues raised here reflects the important role the AONB Unit provides in collecting information about the state of the AONB and interpreting this to the Partnership in order to make balanced decisions.
P1 Increase the opportunities for volunteering and the range of people participating, to benefit the environment, peoples health and well being and local communities in and around the AONB	69	<p>Strongly Agree: 78.3% (54) Agree: 18.8% (13) Disagree: 0% (0) Strongly Disagree: 2.9% (2)</p>	
Comments	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does this benefit wildlife within the AONB? • I strongly feel the open countryside of the Mendips should have more volunteering activities that benefit the environment. Country pursuits, land management projects, but not fitness classes (military boot camps, running clubs etc) and definitely no off road biking. More and more fitness groups are taking to holding their classes outside and whilst there may be a case for charging these organisations a fee (license or permit) and generating additional income that would contribute to conservation, the damage to the tranquillity and beauty of the area (not to mention potential damage/erosion to the landscape) far outweighs the small monetary gain. • Already some great advertising in place • Very important 	Comments noted. Key them of the AONB Unit Business Plan is the development of volunteering opportunities.

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteers are difficult to come by. Increasing opportunities may simply lead to more vacancies! • Work closely with organisations that are already offering these opportunities to help promote and create access to a wider audience, through local engagement first, then widening to the net to local cities. • Be careful or you will have no volunteers. Volunteering should be fun and flexible or it is work. Then volunteers leave. I have seen volunteer vacancies with high levels of responsibility, formal hours, 5 days per week and 4 weeks holiday. I passes on the opportunity and remained at work for more free time and pay. My point is that if volunteering is just unpaid work to meet budget cuts then we need to recognise the link between this and less people volunteering along with other factors. • This was in a previous section! • I would love to get involved!! I love the countryside and i love walking and cycling- best bit is being outdoors always. But whereas I have volunteered before in various companies, things change and unfortunately, i would need to be employed. • We hope that it would be possible for volunteers to help in the restoring of the Buddle House and work with our stonemason. 	
P2 Encourage the involvement of local people and the wider community in the management of the AONB	67	<p>Strongly Agree: 71.6% (48) Agree: 22.4% (15) Disagree: 1.5% (1) Strongly Disagree: 4.5% (3)</p>	
Comments	11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sounds good but there is always the danger of a small very vocal minority dominating - government by Linda Snell (Archers reference) • Why is this necessary ? The area would not be an AONB if it were not for countless generations of farmers taking care of the area. 	Comments noted. Underlines the importance for constant awareness raising activities by the AONB Unit.

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Especially children and young people. • providing those people can display experience in this subject. • Very important • Also consider increasing the involvement of people visiting the area, eg volunteer working holidays • This survey is mentioned in the Gazette on the 27th but the closing date is the 30th. I have not seen it elsewhere. • Hope you do now, not just in the future • Yes - as the only time we ever learn more about you is by looking at your web site. We never are given any information...We live in a village and though it often gets referred to in Parish Council Meetings it may be good to have say a information flyer...sent out by hand delivery once or twice a year. • Public understanding and buy-in is essential • Residents in West Horrington are hoping that the Old Buddle House will be restored. 	
P3 Promote the Mendip Hills as an educational resource for all ages and encourage sharing of research and learning tools	68	<p>Strongly Agree: 75% (51) Agree: 20.6% (14) Disagree: 1.5% (1) Strongly Disagree: 2.9% (2)</p>	
Comments	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When visitors are seen with FIVE PLUS dogs running across fields adjacent to footpaths what chance does wildlife have. • Very important • There is scope for this in the wider countryside. AONBs are not necessarily the exemplars 	Comments noted.
Any further comments	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As far as I can see a good job already done with a vision for the future • The Management Plan is big on vision and might be somewhat criticised for it's all encompassing 'motherhood and apple pie' approach. As a result it is less a Plan with 	Comments noted. Delivery Plan and activity plans pick up on specifics.

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		<p>evidence based approach and more a set of worthy non-controversial shared aspirations. Shortfalls lie in areas of setting priorities, identification of specific goals and timetables for action, what is achievable, identification of accountability, guidance for targeting of resources, measurement of progress, issues concerning quality measures and extent to which goals are achieved. These are no doubt avoided because they likely lead to possible areas of conflict but by being so, properly managed, are more likely to lead to realistic and beneficial developments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I think it would be good to have a carbon management plan for the aonb • Visitors should be fined for straying off footpaths and ALL dogs should be banned from from footpaths during the bird nesting season. • Please feel free to contact myself and the Conservation & Heritage Officer regarding management of the historic environment. • Sometimes areas can be over managed and the raw beauty lost. The Mendips need careful management to not only maximise its potential but to minimise its over-use. • To promote actions that will extend the AONB eastwards. • On the woodland front, I think you should include some specifics about Ash Dieback and how you would like to see the AONBs ash woodlands managed in the light of it - very tricky and happy to talk about this. There will be a need for alternative species and some of these may not be so familiar in the Mendip landscape --how open to change are you. Climate change will also drive this. Also something on the issue of squirrels and deer, which is the main reason that softwoods are so essential for rural woodland businesses to succeed. And happy to talk about the Brexit implications, as far as any of us know about them. • We suggest the MP review could usefully consider to potential opportunities to contribute to the Government's 25 	
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		<p>year environment plan, which contains ambitious proposals to achieve : Clean air, Clean and plentiful water, Thriving plants and wildlife, A reduced risk of harm from environmental hazards, Using resources from nature more sustainably and efficiently, Enhanced beauty, heritage and engagement with the natural environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The revised NPPF also includes strengthened policies on biodiversity and wider environmental net gain, and stronger protection for irreplaceable habitats such as ancient woodland, ancient and veteran trees. • We would also encourage the MP review to consider opportunities and challenges in relation to the emerging West of England JSP, UA local plans and WoE green infrastructure plan. • Recap: I would like to see all the walks recorded, and able to print off including detail about the caves, woodlands, bridle ways, cycle rides etc. Wouldn't that be brilliant? Some of the websites like greentraveller given more promotion. The coloured acorn symbol for different grades of walks- can these be organised into downloadable print? Educational leaflets on tree, flora types, and countryside code. Let's hear from the farmers point of view on farming and animals...case studies etc on old hamlets, hills ancient monuments, etc. This would be really interesting to read as a resident and would be welcome for holiday makers too. 	
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